NMS Bellacoola MSS

361 (31) *Kadis*, "Ocean Fish-Trap": on the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about a quarter of a mile from the *Nusk*" River. [224] It is doubtful whether this was a town, or merely a camping place of the people of *Nusk*" when using their salmon-trap.

"(32) *Nusk*": on a raised mound at the south side of the mouth of the *Nusk*" River, which enters the head of South [731] Bentinck Arm from the east. The meaning is unknown. This [164] was a populous town until the inhabitants were decimated by an epidemic of smallpox.

"(33) *Tălio*: on the west side of the mouth of the river of the same name which flows into South Bentinck Arm from the south. The location of this village was constantly changed, [193] owing to destructive variations in the course of the river. It was formerly a large town, and has been deserted only since 1900. This village had another name, *Tyeuxtic*, "Facing," so called because its houses faced those of the town of *Nusk*".

"(34) *Ai'us*", "At the Head": at the head of South Bentinck Arm there is a bay running south-west, into the upper end of which a small stream empties. The trail leading to the [487] lake at the head of Rivers Inlet follows this valley. *Ai'us*" was located on this creek, at some little distance from the ocean; the name was derived from the geographical location of the town. It has not long been deserted and must have been a populous place to judge from the numerous repositories (II, p. 8).

(35) *Kwapa*: on the east side of the mouth of a creek flowing into the bay at the head of South Bentinck Arm, from the south. This town was of moderate size. The meaning of the name is unknown. It is thought to be in the Rivers Inlet language.

VILLAGES AT KIMSQUIT

[133] Two rivers, the Dean from the east, and the Kimsquit from the north, flow into the head of Dean Channel, and the villages of this area can be grouped according to the two rivers.

Villages near the Dean River

*(38) *Awaiklo:* the present site of the Kimsquit Indian village near the mouth of Dean River. The meaning of the name could not be learned.

*(39) *Nuskel*, "Canyon": on the shore of Dean River at the bottom of the canyon. This large town was only recently deserted.

(38) *Kyut'i*, "Occupied Mound": on the south side of Dean River about one mile from the sea. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name is derived from the small mound on which it was built.

*(39) *Natsqmuk*, "Many Spawning Sockeye Salmon": on south side of Dean River, about one and a quarter miles from the sea. A large town recently deserted.

*(40) *Nuxpikte*, "Place of Many Spring Salmon": on south bank about twenty-five miles from the sea. This spot was not settled when people first occupied this world, but later *Alquasim* (I, p. 330) took possession of it.

(41) *Iyuwuk:* east side of river twenty-eight miles from the sea. There is doubt about this town. It is said to have been a colony of the Kimsquit River settlement, a statement difficult to understand.

(42) *Siwul-ax*, "Where Canoes Are Left": on the north side of the river about thirty-five miles from the sea. Immediately opposite was *Sultkalu*, "Winter Trail." These two are considered as forming one town, but were probably never more than camping grounds at the spot where the winter trail to the interior left the river. It is possible, however, that they formed a town, since the names of the alleged first settlers in the beginning of time are preserved.

*(43) *Asklta:* at Salmon House on the upper Dean River.

The history of the villages on the upper Dean is puzzling. Mythological accounts of their founding were obtained, and some of the older people stated that they had been occupied until recent years. On the other hand, there are apparently

621
623 ture, and the village constitutes a unit for all dances; in fact
[536] this ceremonial unity is its most important function.
[194] With the exception of a few villages built on the seashore,
each Bella Coola settlement consists of a row of houses on the
361 river bank. These are of the usual rectangular, plank-built
[184] type typical of the North-West Coast. In front of them
[342] stretches a sidewalk, usually supported by piles on the side
[171] nearest the river to make it level. The houses, too, in many
cases have piles beneath their front ends, made necessary by
the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two
rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there
[48] is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge
[164] of the river. The number of houses varies; before the smallpox
epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty or forty,
others, only two or three. There is no definite arrangement of
the houses; anyone may build where there is a vacant space.
[453] Much the same arrangement occurs in the sea-coast villages,
each of which depends for its main sustenance on an ocean
fish-trap, as the river villages depend on a salmon-weir.

342 The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire,
[354] often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor,
and around this is an open space free to all. Toward the side-
walls are raised the partitions, forming bedrooms for the dif-
ferent families, or for different members of one. In many cases
the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for
small fires on which different groups cook, the central fire
being used for heating and for more important meals. The
[572] number of families occupying a house depends on its size; an
[222] important chief, with many relatives, often builds an enormous
house which is occupied by ten or more families; smaller houses
contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free
and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and any-
[261] one present when food is being distributed is given a share as
353 a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with
[535] carved upright posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall.
A door through the latter leads to the back-room, so important
in dances.

presents were distributed to validate the name, Thaiyelhem, which Sinaqael had chosen for himself. 534*

Sinaqael married a Bella Bella woman who brought with her the prerogative of a dance with respect to the devil-fish. In Bella Bella this dance was connected both with the feather and the comb, but in Kimsquit it was performed only as a feather dance. It was first given there by Saiyaem-i, a relative of Sinaqael, and has since been performed in the fashion in Kimsquit. Their daughter received the Bella Bella name, Xalem, which has since remained in Kimsquit. [484] [575] [585] [551]

CREATION MYTH OF *Ilgat-i*[1]

In the beginning of time there came to *Ilgat-i*, on the east side of the Dean River, about one mile from the sea, *Sawaumkhe* and his three younger brothers. They brought a stone hammer as their present from *Ilgawaiem*. After they had lived some time on this earth, *Sawaumkhe* asked Yelhtimut to have a canoe ready for him on the morrow. By the next day Yelhtimut had completed a fine craft. *Sawaumkhe* was delighted and spent four days fitting it out; then set out with his three younger brothers for a trip to the far north, where he knew by report that abalone-shells were to be found.[2] The four did not know the route and were consequently penetrating into fiords from which there was no exit; however, they persevered and were helped by all whom they encountered, *Sawaumkhe*'s name being well known. After a month's voyage, they reached their goal. They found themselves before a lofty precipice falling sheer into the ocean with a cavern visible in it at very low tide. This they boldly entered. At first they were deluged with falling cone-fish; in fact, their canoe would have been sunk by the weight of these if the youngest brother had not held up his cedar-bark cloak to ward them off. A little further on they found countless abalone-shells, with which they swiftly filled the canoe, fearing lest the tide should rise sufficiently to prevent their return if they stayed to investigate further. Once safely outside they camped, and the eldest brother took the opportunity to bestow names on the younger brothers for things they had seen or done on the way. He called his second brother *Nawaie-dag*, "The Warrior," as if he had fought against the abalone; the third *Ilkat-limin*, "Falling Star-Fish," and the youngest *Ilkayen*, "The Roof-Maker," a reference to the

*Related by Jim Pollard. Boas (p. 66), has recorded a similar myth from Bella Coola with different characters.

[1]The Bella Coola are emphatic in stating that abalone-shell comes from the north or the east; possibly this may be explained by an indirect trade route. [487]